PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

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AGENDA

- Purpose
- What is Management Looking For
- Be Prepared
- Categorize Skills/Abilities
- Core Competencies
- Questions
- Practice Interviewing
- The Interview
- Summary

10 Easy Ways to Sabotage Your Career

- 1. Not being accountable for one's behavior.
- 2. Not having meaning and purpose in one's job.
- 3. No self-development plan for improvement.
- 4. **Inability to communicate effectively with others.**
- 5. Difficulty managing multiple priorities.

"I believe, …. , 90% of all problems in Corporate America are communication related"

Steven R. Webbers, *"10 Timeless Principles of Profession Success"*

10 Easy Ways to Sabotage Your Career (cont)

- 6. Little understanding of how to "play the game."
- 7. Resisting change.
- 8. Having a bad attitude.
- 9. Not having fun in one's job.
- 10. Not wanting to better serve the customer.

Purpose

- Ensure you are ready for any type of interview
- You may not get this job – good practice
- Opportunity to be seen – visibility
- Interview is only 30% of total score
  - Need to be make sure you are a complete package

What is Management Looking For

- Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAS)
  - Core Functional (IM, ES, PMS, EN, PM, etc.)
    - Experience specific to that functional series
    - Weapon system knowledge
    - Taken directly from position description
  - Manager
    - Management skills
    - Experience working with/leading an IPT
- Creativity, initiative, ambition, assertiveness, enthusiasm
- **Communication skills**

What is Management Looking For (cont)

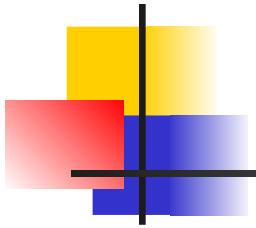
- Teamwork, collaborative management
- Delegation skills
- **Ability to cope with change**
- Self starter
- **Understanding of the current political climate/corporate issues**
- Honesty and candor
- Dependability

Be Prepared

- Know the organization and the Job
  - What is the product or service they provide
  - Who are their customers
  - Get a copy of the position description (PD)
    - Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (**KSAs**)
    - Duties & responsibilities
  - Talk to people who work in the area
  - Talk to people who hold similar positions

Be Prepared (cont)

- Know Yourself
  - Review your career brief, LCCEP whole person score, 201 file (*make sure everything is current*)
  - Categorize skills/abilities & align to the PD
    - List all duties and responsibilities
    - Programs or projects managed - Member or participant
  - Identify knowledge base/accomplishments
    - Functional/weapon system/managerial
    - Education, awards, PME, career specific training, etc.
  - Understand the difference between technical, procedural, generic and programmatic experience
  - **Write it down**



Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSAs)

GS-1101/11 Prod Mgt Spec

- Knowledge of:
  - G079/G072/G004B systems
  - Logistics Support Review (LSR) Process
  - AFMC & Directorate funding process for DPEM funds
  - DoD planning, programming & budgeting system
  - Maintenance scheduling & planning functions

GS-2010/9 Item Manager

- Knowledge of
  - Inventory management principles, concepts, & methodologies
  - Judgment & analytical techniques in resolving issues & problems of a procedural nature
  - Logistics plans, processes, programs, procedures & maintenance concepts

GS-346/11 Program Manager

- Knowledge:
  - Wide range of principles, concepts, & practices
  - Parts each member of an IPT play
  - Skill in applying knowledge to difficult & complex work assignments
  - Comprehensive, intensive, practical knowledge of wide range of technical field & skill in applying to new methods

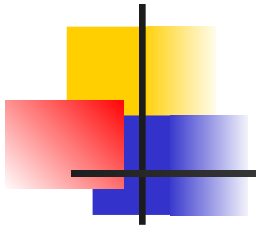
Core Competency

What is it: A **Managerial** Competency is an underlying characteristic of an individual that can be shown to predict top performance in a job. Characteristics that enable top performers to demonstrate critical behaviors ***more often, in more situations, and with better results.***

- What are they:
  - Conceptual & strategic thinking
  - Self confidence
  - Initiative
  - Entrepreneurial achievement
  - Working through others/group leadership

Core Competencies

- **Not just for supervisory positions**
  - Important regardless of the job
  - Use management skills every day – on or off the job
  - Electrician, equipment specialist, item manager, program manager, administrative assistant



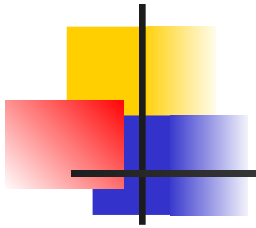
Managerial Definitions

Managerial Definitions

- Conceptual/Strategic Thinking: ability to see the “big picture” and create long term solutions
- Self Confidence: see themselves as able to accomplish most things, willing to take risks
- Initiative: based on judgments about future events, takes action to improve a potential outcome without direction from others

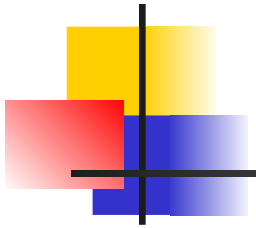
Managerial Definitions (cont)

- Working Through Others/Group Leadership: managing others in work that requires a team effort or coordinated efforts between a number of separate people
- Entrepreneurial Achievement: opportunities to make a substantial impact in the way business is done, or in introducing totally new systems, products or ventures into an existing environment



Interview Questions

- Read the Question
  - Most important thing in the interview
- Break it down
  - Usually multiple questions in one
    - Tell about a project, how you found the problem, what you did to fix it.
- Panel is interested how and what you did – not the widget



SAMPLE QUESTIONS

SAMPLE QUESTION

Describe how you used your influence to get peers and subordinates to accept a new idea and implement it.

PANEL LOOKING FOR:

-Working With Others: managing others in work that requires a team effort or coordinated efforts between a number of separate people

- Initiative: based on judgments about future events, takes action to improve a potential outcome without direction from others

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

As a Program Manager, what management techniques and skills would you use in managing people and resources? What past experience/training have you had that demonstrates your leadership skills? Please explain!

1-3 Points – Identified no more than one or two examples of knowledge, training or experience that demonstrated the employee's ability to accomplish this position as a Program Manager over several different logistics skilled personnel.

4-6 Points – Identified three to four examples of knowledge, training or experience that demonstrates the employee's ability to accomplish this position as a supervisor over several different logistics skilled personnel.

7-10 Points – Identified five or more examples of knowledge, training or experience that demonstrates the employee's ability to accomplish this position as a Program Manager over several different logistics skilled personnel.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Describe the role of a logistics manager in an Integrated Product Team (IPT), involved in sustainment and acquisition of weapon systems and subsystems.

1-3 Points – Answer indicates little understanding of the roles of a logistics manager in sustainment and acquisition logistics IPT activities
4-6 Points – Answer indicates good overall understanding of the roles of a logistics manager in sustainment and acquisition logistics IPT activities. Was able to identify some members of the team and their interrelationship.
7-10 Points – Answer indicates a comprehensive understanding of the roles of a logistics manager in sustainment and acquisition logistics IPT activities . Was able to identify the members of the IPT and their relationship to each other.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Please describe your experience and level of responsibility for sustainment of a major fielded Air Force weapon system. Include involvement of Air Logistic Center and/or Contractor resources to identify and resolve problems.

1-3 Points – Sustainment experience indicates resolving backorders or routine sustainment supply issues.

4-6 Points – Has actively participated in the preparation and validation of spare parts procurements and budgeting requirements using D200 A & C data systems. Has prepared a modification package including CCB approval.

7-10 Points – Has used Depot or Contractor engineering, testing or analysis to diagnose an existing or future field problem (A&S Program). Implemented a program or the required sustainment

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Describe your experience and personal involvement in the planning, preparation and execution of an acquisition program for development or production of a weapon system or subsystem. 10 Points Total

1-3 Points – Prepared provisioning documents or reviewed technical data for new system or system modification

4-6 Points - Active in preparing for and participating in a TIM, CDR, PCA, etc,

7-10 Points – Has managed a program through the program and budget approval process and has prepared SAMP documents or equivalent. Has incorporated the active involvement of field activities in developing and gaining

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Describe your experience as an Item Manager and explain the spares support process from cradle to grave. (Initial provisioning, procurement, repair, disposal, redistribution, etc)

<u>5 Points</u> – Has had at least 5 years hands on experience as an Inventory Management Specialist and can explain the responsibilities of an IM and the systems used.

<u>3 Points</u> – Has had at least 3 years hands on experience as an IM but is less skilled technically.

<u>1 Point</u> – Has less than 3 years hands on experience and is not familiar with all IM systems and responsibilities.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Describe your interpersonal communication skills, i.e., written/oral, that demonstrates your ability to reach consensus among organizations with competing needs for limited resources. Give an example of a conflict you had to deal with.

5 Points – Demonstrated strong skills, both orally and written, dealing with organizations and upper management.

3 Points – Some skills, but needs more development.

1 Point – Very little skill demonstrated.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND BENCHMARKS

Describe your ability to perform an analysis of data, both empirical and model data, and develop and present a solution to upper management. Give an example of a project or problem you were successful in analyzing and presenting to upper management.

5 Points – Demonstrated strong technical skills as well as presentation skills.

3 Points – Some skills, but needs more development.

1 Point – Very little skill demonstrated.

Practice Interviewing

- Match your skills to potential questions
  - Developed from KSAs on PD
- Practice answering the questions in front of the mirror, friend, spouse, etc.
- Time yourself – 15 to 20 minutes total for three to five questions
- **Don’t ramble**
- Have list of additional accomplishments ready_
  - Education, church community work, etc..

The Interview

- Given 15 - 20 minutes to read questions and formulate answers
- Read all the questions
  - Break questions down - match to programs, projects, skills you've listed
  - Answer every part of the question
  - Make notes on cards/paper provided
- You can take other notes in with you
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification
- Smile & maintain eye contact

The Interview

- Watch your time
  - Ask panel to give you 5/10 minute warnings
  - No points are given for questions not answered
- Do not assume panel will give you credit for what you think they know
- Control nervous habits
  - Put your glasses (unless you need them), keys, pens pencils aside

The Interview

- Talk about yourself - Use the word “I”
  - Teams I lead
  - The team solved
  - Briefings I gave
  - Ideas I pushed through
  - Process improvements I made
  - **Results**
- Don’t be afraid to say you were part of a team
- Talk about the part you played on the team

The Interview

- Opportunity to add information
  - Education
  - Community service
- Thank the panel for the interview
- Shake everyone’s hand

The Interview

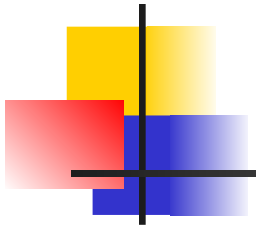
- Don’ts
  - Don’t complain about previous jobs or supervisors
    - **Positive attitude**
  - Don’t try too hard to impress
    - Bragg or be too aggressive
  - **Dishonest** – stretching the truth
  - Undersell your capabilities
  - **Negative** comments
  - Not prepared
  - Tardiness
  - Prejudicial remarks

Do's

- Basics
  - Review your accomplishments (again & again)
  - Arrive early
  - Get a good night's sleep
  - Eat before the interview
  - Dress professionally/appropriate for the job
    - Err on the side of too dressy but conservative
  - Be clean, neat and well groomed
  - **Communicate**

Summary

- Be prepared
  - ***Know yourself and the job***
- Answer all parts of the question
- Use the allotted time wisely
  - ***Don't ramble***
- Practice
- **Positive Attitude**
- Dress appropriately
- Sell yourself



Back-up Slides

Managerial Competencies

- Self confidence
- Tenacity
- Ability to influence
- Build coalitions
- Working through others
- Group leadership
- Conceptual thinking
- Customer service
- Entrepreneurial achievement
- Flexibility
- Initiative
- Judgment and analytical thinking

Conceptual and Strategic Thinking

Top logisticians are able to create consistency out of apparently unrelated and random pieces of information or stimuli. They spontaneously go about creating these patterns, which may result in solutions to complex problems, innovations for future directions, or new theories about phenomena they are involved with. They tend to comprehend and see the whole big picture at once (the “forest”) rather than focusing on the pieces or a series of individual items (the “trees”). They often help others to understand the big picture by translating complex, confusing

Self-Confidence

Top logisticians believe they have the capabilities for doing a job as well or better than others; more importantly, they tend to see themselves as able to accomplish most things that they need or want to. This confidence enables top logisticians in pursuing challenging objectives on their own or through others, often taking calculated personal risks in doing so. Because they possess a “global” confidence about themselves, they are comfortable with looking at themselves honestly-weaknesses as well as strengths, accepting responsibility for mistakes and learning from them

Initiative

Initiative is demonstrated when the top logistician looks ahead and , based on judgments about future events, takes action to improve a potential outcome without direction from others. Many times, if the situation is not clear, they demonstrate Initiative in gathering relevant information for making the optimal decision or action. After events occur, the top logistician will always follow-up until every last detail is determined to be to their satisfaction. The outcome of Initiative is that there are fewer crises and problems erupting, and greater progress and improvement occurring - appearing almost

Entrepreneurial Achievement

The top logistician spontaneously looks for opportunities to make a substantial impact in the way business is done, or in introducing totally new systems, products or ventures into an existing environment. Therefore, success is achieved by starting a new business or business line, turning around a failing organization, or changing people's levels by the implementation of a new idea, product, or system. Frequently these objectives are accomplished by investments in time and resources, taking calculated risks in the process. Often these individuals are not interested in the operational

Working Through Others Group Leadership

Top logisticians are effective at managing others in work that requires a team effort or coordinated efforts between a number of separate people. This situation occurs when all individuals have some stake in the outcome of the work, and so, effects the job of a manager, task force leader, team leader or committee chairperson. At the highest levels, the top logistician effectively manages the work of others without any formal authority or power over them. This is accomplished by building a team spirit; getting others to realize that they all must work together to accomplish their mutual or individual objectives; getting people involved by obtaining their input; and motivating them to participate and work toward achievement of the goals of the group.